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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, [ ] Automation Task Force   STATSPEC

SUBJECT   : Comments on [ ] Automation Project --   STATSPEC
                    Phase II Report

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REFERENCE   : Letter of Transmittal from Chairman,
                    [ ] Automation Task Force, dtd 16 Oct.
                    73, subj.: [ ] Automation Project --   STATSPEC
                    Phase II Report

        The referenced report has been reviewed by appropriate

members of this Office. I hope the attached comments and

recommendations are of help to you. Please let me know if I can

be of any further assistance.

[ ]   STATINTL

                    Deputy Director of Joint Computer Support

Attached: a/s
cc: DD/I Planning Officer

21 November 1973

General

1. Because of the nature of the [____] processing and its remote   STATSPEC
physical location, OJCS agrees with the concept of a dedicated special
purpose system. Other Agency components such as OCI and OSR should
be interested in this system, since their publication activities are
similar.

STATSPEC   2. The hardware costs stated by DDI are much higher than
systems either in being or under design that are comparable to the
[____] requirement. (Comments about specific hardware components
follow.)

3. The study was quite specific about hardware and recommended
hardware expenditures of almost $1 million. In general, required soft-
ware expenditures often equal or exceed that of hardware, yet the study
does not size this aspect of the problem. Equally serious, the continuing
costs of software maintenance were ignored.

4. OJCS is willing to provide further assistance [____] in   STATSPEC
reviewing a Phase III RFP and in evaluating the responses to that RFP.

Recommendations

1. The Phase III RFP should be concerned only with desired
functional specifications and those parameters necessary for sizing.
The inclusion of specific hardware configurations and text editing
methodology places a constraint on potential bidders as to both the size
of the computer system and the philosophy of its use. If a bidder is
allowed to bid hardware and software, a less expensive system may
result. We realize that when the RFP allows creative solutions, the
evaluation process becomes more difficult. For this reason OJCS is
prepared to assist in the RFP formulation and in the subsequent evalua-
tion.

2. Finally, because the technology for this type of application
is proven, it might be appropriate to ask for a fixed price commitment

from the bidders. In this case, the RFP would have to be much more thorough than is usual, but the preliminary work might save time, effort, and money in the long run.

Specific Comments on the Data Dimensions, Inc. (DDI) Phase II Study

1. Data Dimensions noted that the specific procedures to be used for capitalizing words represents a major decision [   ] STATSPEC It is major because for whatever method is chosen, there will be a direct relation in cost. It is unfortunate that DDI did not provide a quantitative analysis of these costs and trade-offs. For example, if capitalization indicators were supplied by editors and transcribers, requirements for central processor power and direct access storage are reduced considerably as compared to a fully automated method.

2. The selection of the type of remote terminal to be used by STATSPEC the editors is another major decision [   ] Again, although DDI noted this, there is no quantitative analysis as to the impact on system costs of the various alternatives. It is not clear why DDI recommended the more expensive "intelligent" terminals.

3. The total requirement for disk storage seems to be over-stated. When using the volume parameters of the Phase II study, a 20 million character store for the current day and the three previous days looks adequate.

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4. [   ] should approve a complete detailed system design and not agree to an approval procedure on a program-by-program basis, as recommended by DDI.

5. The use of uninterrupted power equipment which costs about $70,000 is not consistent with the conditions of availability imposed on the overall system.